

The always important subject of malaria derives new interest in this germ relation because of recent experiments and discoveries. Laveran claims to have recently discovered in malarialized patients a peculiar microbe, which he asserts is not a bacterial body, but an amœboid organism, parasitic in nature, and infesting the red corpuscles. It is claimed that this organism is destructible by therapeutic doses of quinine. The assistants of Laveran, in the city of Rome, assume to have frequently verified this statement. Sternberg, of this country, says that he has demonstrated the same to Professor William H. Welch, of John Hopkins University, in whose laboratory the microscopic examination was made. The blood was drawn from a patient, it seems, in the outset of an intermittent paroxysm. Brought under the microscope, the demonstration of the amœboid organisms was made in the presence of several medical gentlemen, and to the satisfaction of Professor Welch. Sternberg cites his own laboratory experiments to show that the bacillus malarial of Klebs and Tommasi Crudelli cannot be destroyed by an amount of quinine that would be safe to administer. But the "amœboid blood parasite," as he calls the discovery of Laveran, is classed among the infusoria, and they seem susceptible to the action of quinine. Laveran claims that they are found in quantities more or less abundant in proportion to the mild or pernicious character of the infection. It is asserted that no observer has found these peculiar infusorial bodies except in malarialized persons. Time alone will show whether these assertions and claims of Laveran and his followers will become to be established scientific facts.

It would be superfluous and wearisome to detain this enlightened medical body with a discussion of the various theories that have been advanced as to the nature and cause of malaria. As you are aware, Salisbury contended that he had discovered its cause in the algæ or spores of the palmella; Burdon Sanderson, that he had discovered in his pyrogen the essential factor, and that by inoculating a healthy subject with it he could produce undoubted malarial attacks. These theories proved to be only sensational. We are all familiar with the captivating views of our own distinguished countryman, Professor Mitchell, of Philadelphia. The old theory of Lancisi, that malaria is gaseous, held sway for a long period of time over the mind of the medical world. But it remains for future investigations and discoveries to establish the true origin and